

Reading for Ashkenazim: Amos 9:7-15

modeled after the recordings in *Navigating the Bible II* (listed there as being for Parashat Acharei Mot):

<https://bible.ort.org/books/haftarotd4.asp?action=displaypage&book=3&chapter=9&verse=7&portion=32>

9:7 [Are you not] [like the children] of the Cushites—[are you not] [like them to Me], *B'nei Yisrael*? [so says YHWH].
[Did I not]—[O Israel]—[bring you up] from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and Aram from Kir?
8 [Know for a fact] [that the eyes] of the Lord *Elohim* (YHWH) [are on the kingdom] that is sinful,
and I [will destroy it] [from off] the face [of the earth], [but rest assured],
[I will indeed] [by no means] utterly [wipe them out]—the house of Jacob. [Thus speak YHWH].
9 For lo, [I will give] the order, and shake up—among all the nations—the house of Israel,
[just as one] shakes with a sieve, yet there shall fall not a pebble to the ground.
10 [By the sword] [they shall die]—all the sinners [of My people]:
[those who do say], “[It won’t overtake] [or even come near] [to us]—the evil.”
11 On that day, [I will raise up] the tabernacle (*sukkah*) of David [that lies prostrate]. [I will repair] [its broken walls].
Its ruins [I will raise up]. [I will rebuild it] as in days of old.
12 So that they may possess the remnant of Edom [and all the nations] where called was My name [within them].
[Thus says YHWH] who shall do this.
13 Behold: days are coming—[declares YHWH]—[when will meet up] the plowman with the reaper,
and the treader of grapes, with [the sower of seed]. [There will run] [through the mountains] [sweet wine], and all the hills [will flow* with it].
14 [And I will return] the captivity of [My people Israel], [and they will rebuild] cities that are desolate, [and will settle them],
[and they shall plant] vineyards and drink their wine. They will cultivate gardens, and eat [of their fruits].
15 [I will plant them] [on their lands]. They will not be uprooted [ever again] from their land [that I gave] to them.
[end melody] Thus speaks YHWH your God.

*Jerusalem Bible

Reading for Sephardim: Ezekiel 20:2-20

20:2 Then came the word of YHWH to me saying,

3 [Thou son of man], [you must now speak] to the elders of Israel, and say to them, This is the word of the Lord *Elohim* (YHWH).

To inquire of Me have you [indeed come]? [As I live] [I shall not take questions] [from you]. [Thus declares] the Lord *Elohim*.

4 Will you [judge them]—[will you rebuke them], [son of man]? The abhorrent acts of their fathers, [make known to them].

5 You must [say this to them]: [These are the very words] of the Lord *Elohim*.

[On the day] that I [chose Israel], [I lifted] [up My hand] to the seed of the house of Jacob, that I be known to them in the land of Egypt.

I raised My hand to them saying, [I am truly] YHWH your God.

6 And [on that day] I lifted My hand [to them] [to bring them out] from the land of Egypt

[to a land] that I [had sought out for them], flowing with milk and honey. Most beautiful (*ts'vi*) it was, of all the lands.

7 Then [I said this to them], [For each and every man], [the loathsome things] [before his eyes], [let him cast away].

With the idols of Egypt, [do not be defiled]. I am YHWH your God.

8 [But they rebelled against Me]. [Indeed they were] not willing to listen to Me.

[And for every man], [the things loathsome] [before their eyes] [they did not] [cast off], and the idols of Egypt, they [did not forsake].

[And so I thought], [I will pour out] My wrath [against them], [and thus spend] My anger [on them] in the midst of the land of Egypt.

9 But I acted for the sake of My name [in order that] [it not be profaned] in the eyes of the nations,

whom [they lived among] (*or*: of whom [they lived in their midst]). [in bringing them out] from the land of Egypt.

10 [So I took them] from the land of Egypt [and I brought them] [into the wilderness].

11 [And I gave] to them My statutes. [And My laws] [I made] [known to them],

such that [if they] [are fulfilled] [by a man] (*adam*), he shall live through them.

12 And also My sabbaths I gave to them to serve as a sign [between Me] and them,

[so that they might know] [that true it is]: I am YHWH, [who sanctifies them].

20:13 But they rebelled—the house of Israel—in the wilderness. In My statutes they did not walk.
 [As for My laws]: [they rejected them], [concerning which] [if one] [will do them], a man will [live by them].
 My sabbaths they profaned grievously,
 [and so I thought] to pour [My indignation]—[My wrath—over them] [in the desert], [to destroy them].
 14 [But I acted] for [the sake of My name], [that it not] be profaned in the eyes of the nations,
 when I brought them out, [before their eyes].
 15 [And I on My part] [made a firm vow] [as I lifted My hand] [to them] in the wilderness,
 [swearing that I] would surely not bring them into the land [I had given to them],
 flowing with milk and honey, the most beautiful it is, [of all the lands].
 16 Because My laws [they in fact did reject],
 and My statutes—[they would not walk] [by them], [and My sabbaths] they profaned,
 [and because of the fact]: after their idols, their hearts did walk.
 17 [But with compassion] [I looked with My eyes] [upon them], [and did not destroy them].
 [So I did not make] [a full end of them], [to finish them off] in the wilderness.
 18 I said to their children [in the wilderness], in the statutes of your fathers [do not walk].
 [As for *their* laws], [do not observe them].
 [With their idols], [do not be defiled].
 19 I am YHWH your God: [by My statutes], do walk. [And as for My laws]: [observe them], and do them.
 20 My sabbaths—[keep holy], [since they are] a sign [between Me] and you,
 [that you may know] [that indeed] [end melody] I am YHWH, your God.

Len Fellman's English readings with tropes

The purpose of this project is to translate *THE SONG OF THE TORAH* into English.

I work by comparing as many as ten English translations of a *pasuk* and creating a cantillated English sentence that sounds as much as possible like the Hebrew. They follow the Hebrew as closely as possible, word for word and trope by trope. The English language has an amazing flexibility, making it possible to make the English word order match that of the Hebrew quite well, allowing for some “poetic licence”, and some willingness on the part of the listener to be “carried” by the melody more than by the English syntax. The translation needs to sound good when *chanted*, but not necessarily when *spoken or read*.

Unlike most translations, these “transtropilations” are not intended to be a substitute for the Hebrew. On the contrary, they are meant to provide a “window” into the Hebrew text and its musical expression. My ideal listener knows enough Hebrew and has enough interest to follow the Hebrew in a bilingual text while the *leyner* is chanting the English version, to bring the Hebrew text to life, both *verbally* and *musically*. For this purpose I use *exactly* the same tropes in the English as in the Hebrew (almost always on the corresponding English word).

The texts can be used to do **consecutive translation**, i.e. leyning a phrase in Hebrew, followed by the corresponding phrase sung in English. Some of my recordings demonstrate this. I do this frequently when leyning for groups that either know little Hebrew, or that don't have a *chumash* in front of them.

I favor literal translations (e.g. “cut a covenant”) to call attention to Hebrew idioms, and towards simpler (even if less accurate) words (e.g. Ex. 12:7 “beam above the door” rather than “lintel”) to be easier to follow. If my readings provoke a discussion of the Hebrew, I consider that as justification for using less-than-idiomatic English. I try to find just the right balance between “literalness” and “listenable-ness”. A primary goal is throwing light on the Hebrew syntax.

In order to adapt the trope symbols to a left-to-right language like English, I *reversed* the direction of the trope symbols:

mercha tipcha munach tevir mapakh *or* yetiv kadma *or* pashta geresh gershayim telisha katana telisha gedola

(Generally speaking the *conjunctive tropes* such as mercha, munach, mapakh, kadma, and telisha katana “lean toward” the words they “conjoin” to, while the *disjunctive tropes* such as tipcha, geresh, gershayim, and telisha gedola “lean away” from the words that follow, so as to create a sense of separation.)

The trope symbol is normally placed under the accented syllable, unless it is a *pre-positive* accent (telisha gedola, placed *at the beginning* of the word or phrase) or a *post-positive* one (telisha katana or pashta, placed at the *end* of the word or phrase).

The Hebrew text frequently puts a *makkeph* (which is like a hyphen) between words in order to treat them as a single word to be chanted. I use a different system for English: If an entire English phrase is to be chanted to a single trope melody, I place it between grey brackets, as in this phrase from the Book of Lamentations:

[clings to her skirts]

The *leyner* is invited to fit this phrase to the *Eicha* “rivi'i” melody in whatever way seems most natural.

As a variant of the “grey bracket” device, I indicate the following pairs of tropes by “wrapping them around” the phrase which will have the combined melody:

mercha/tipcha	kadma/geresh (<i>or</i> : azla, etc.)	mercha siluk
(Renew our days)	(She weeps bitterly).	(a fire-offering to God)

Again, the *leyner* should decide on the most natural way to fit the phrase to the combined trope melody.

I put words in gray which I consider essential but which don’t strictly match the Hebrew. I also “pad” some phrases with extra words in gray to fill out a musical phrase nicely. Different trope systems vary widely in the length of the musical phrase used, so the words in gray may or not be used depending on the *leyner*’s cantillation system. In particular, the tropes *telisha g’dola* (ר), *legarmeh*, *metigah-zakef*, and *pazer* vary widely in the musical phrases used for chanting. (And please indulge me in my whimsical treatments of *shalsholet*.)

“*Metigah-zakef*” is a special trope combination which can be recognized by a kadma and a zakef katon appearing on the same Hebrew word (again, a *makkeph* makes two words into one). (There are several examples in Genesis 18 & 19, beginning with 18:16). I indicate this by placing the corresponding English phrase in grey brackets:

[Take heed—take care for yourself]

In some trope systems (notably cantor Moshe Haschel in “Navigating the Bible II”) this is given a very distinctive melody—for which purpose extra syllables fill out the musical phrase (as in “take care” in this example). Haschel’s system also chants the trope *munach* as *legarmeh* more often than other systems do.

I don’t write a single word of translation without first hearing the melody of the phrase in my mind, following one of two trope systems: The one by Portnoy and Wolff (*The Art of Cantillation*) or the one by Joshua R. Jacobson (*Chanting the Hebrew Bible*).

I transcribe the name יהוה as YHWH (in small caps). I almost always chant this as *yud-hey-vav-hey*, which I have discovered fits marvelously into several of the trope melodies. But of course the *leyner* can choose to pronounce it as “*God*” or “*Adonai*”.

The English translations I mostly use (besides several scholarly commentaries) are the following:

Aryeh Kaplan, ‘The Living Torah’ (1981) (also my source for proper names & transliterations)
 Richard Elliott Friedman, ‘The Bible With Sources Revealed’ (2003)
 Everett Fox, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (1997)
 The Stone Edition ‘Tanach’ (1996)
 JPS ‘Hebrew-English Tanach’, (2nd Ed. 2000), *along with* Orlinsky, ‘Notes on the New Translation of the Torah’ (1969)
 Robert Alter, ‘The Five Books of Moses’ (2004)
 Commentaries in the ‘Anchor Bible’ series
 Rotherham, The Emphasized Bible (1902)
 The Jerusalem Bible (1966) (also my source for topic headings)
 The New King James Bible (1982)